AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (currently amended) A method for obtaining an aptamer, comprising the following steps (a) to (e) with steps (b) to (e) repeated any number of times:

(a) immobilizing to a microarray substrate a plurality of polynucleotides comprising nucleotide sequences that are different from one another;

(b) contacting a labeled target molecule with said microarray substrate comprising immobilized ~~with~~ polynucleotides;

(c) determining the binding strengths of said polynucleotides to said target molecule;

(d) selecting one or more polynucleotides having relatively high binding strengths; and

(e) immobilizing each of the polynucleotides selected by step (d) to a microassay substrate, wherein a mutation is introduced into said ~~polynucleotide~~ nucleotide sequences.

2. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the mutation in step (e) is a one- or two-base substitution mutation.

3. (currently amended) The method of ~~claim 1 or 2~~ claim 1, wherein the ~~labeling is fluorescence labeling~~ label is a fluorescent label.

4. (currently amended) The method of ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, wherein the ~~contact~~ contacting in step (b) is carried out by immersing the microarray substrate in a solution in which the target molecule has been dissolved.

5. (currently amended) The method of ~~any one of claims 1 to 4~~ claim 1, wherein the polynucleotides in step (a) comprise computer-generated random sequences.

6. (new) The method of claim 2, wherein the label is a fluorescent label.

7. (new) The method of claim 2, wherein the contacting in step (b) is carried out by immersing the microarray substrate in a solution in which the target molecule has been dissolved.

8. (new) The method of claim 3, wherein the contacting in step (b) is carried out by immersing the microarray substrate in a solution in which the target molecule has been dissolved.

9. (new) The method of claim 2, wherein the polynucleotides in step (a) comprise computer-generated random sequences.

10. (new) The method of claim 3, wherein the polynucleotides in step (a) comprise computer-generated random sequences.

11. (new) The method of claim 4, wherein the polynucleotides in step (a) comprise computer-generated random sequences.